

Chapter 5

Recommendations

SECTION I

This section summarizes the Commission's recommendations, more fully discussed in Appendix H, that constitute those required by Title II of Public Law 100-526, to be accepted or rejected in their entirety by the Secretary of Defense and, if accepted by the Secretary, subsequently by the Congress.

The Commission's recommendations for closure and realignment affect 145 installations. Of this number, 86 are to be closed fully, five are to be closed in

part, and 54 will experience a change, an increase or a decrease, as units or activities are relocated. The details of these actions are found in the appendix, along with an index of affected installations.

Implementation of these recommendations will result in annual savings of \$693.6 million and a 20-year savings with a net present value of \$5.6 billion. These savings are both realistic and substantial.

SECTION II

During the course of its evaluation and deliberations, the Commission encountered a number of situations that, while not in all cases involving proposed base closures or realignments, need attention. Accordingly, the Commission has decided to make a series of recommendations in these areas, with the understanding that they are not part of the "all or none" package. These recommendations are, however, related to issues that were investigated during the Commission's review of the base structure, and in some cases are critical to the successful implementation of the Commission's closure and realignment recommendations.

The lack of comment by the Commission on other ongoing actions, studies, or proposals regarding military

installations should not be construed as implying Commission support or non-support for such actions, studies, or proposals; the Commission was constrained by its charter and by time.

Program Implementation

The Commission is extremely concerned that the implementation of its recommendations may be frustrated unless adequate funding is made available early in the process and existing rules and regulations affecting the process are streamlined. It is clear that if this process is to move forward during a time of severe budget constraints, it will be necessary to make the program self-financing to the greatest extent possible. The Commission

strongly recommends:

-- that the Base Closure Account (hereinafter, the Account) be capitalized as quickly as possible. As a minimum, the Account should receive \$300 million in appropriations in the FY 90 Defense Appropriations Bill.

-- that special reprogramming rules be developed with the Congress and the Department of Defense to permit the transfer of other Department funds into the Account as necessary. In particular, the Services should be given the authority to reprogram FY 89 funds appropriated for construction projects at installations designated for closure. This action will enable the Services to accomplish timely environmental analyses, construction design, and site preparation.

-- that there be enacted statutory relief from Section 207(a)(2)(B) of the Base Closure and Realignment Act, which prohibits the Secretary from transferring funds into the Account from other funds appropriated to the Department until approval is obtained in an appropriations act and notice is provided to the Congress. The Commission is concerned that this procedure will delay timely implementation of its recommendations.

-- that there be enacted statutory relief from the provisions of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1940 (40 U.S.C. 471 et seq.) that restrict the Secretary of Defense from disposing of real property and facilities. The current requirements entail a complex and time-consuming screening process. The Commission is concerned that delays may result in minimal proceeds being made available to the Account to fund relocations.

-- that the Administration remove regulatory impediments for the sale of excess land and reinforce the current Office of Management and Budget policy that transfers between federal agencies be accomplished at fair-market value.

-- that the Defense Department accelerate efforts to dispose of "salable" land in order to get sales proceeds into the Account as rapidly as possible. The Department is encouraged to be innovative in this effort. For example, it may not be necessary to wait for current military occupants to vacate the land before a sale is made. Further, a sale can be contingent on the buyer's building replacement facilities for the military with occupants moving when these facilities are available.

-- that the Secretary of Defense, in managing the Account, make disbursements from the Account in proportion to the Services' contributions to the Account and the Services' expected savings. This approach is fair and maintains the incentives for the Services to take actions to build the Account balance.

Expanded Training Areas

Realistic training of Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force units is a difficult challenge. In many geographic regions, the Services are constrained in their ability to train because of encroachment near maneuver areas and live-fire ranges. Examples include limits on air operations due to noise, ordnance limits at various ranges, reduced availability of ranges for live fire, restrictions on the use of landing beaches, and pressures from local communities to halt night training activities such as artillery firing and air strikes. These encroachments on existing training ranges are occurring at the same

time that growing maneuver speeds and ranges of modern weapons demand the availability of greater expanses of real estate and air space for training. Chapter 3 contains a further discussion of this issue.

Large joint-training areas will help optimize the military use of restricted land, air, and water space, and allow the Services to train as they would expect to fight. In order to do this, the Services should be seeking ways in which they might expand training areas, such as the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California to accommodate the need for battalion, brigade, and division-level maneuver with artillery, missile, and air support, and to recognize the diminishing ability to accomplish such training in now-inadequate areas. For example, a joining of Twentynine Palms, Fort Irwin, and Camp Roberts, California; Nellis AFB, Nevada; and range areas in Western Utah could, with the addition of several hundred thousand acres of leased land in Death Valley, provide a greatly expanded training area to better satisfy the needs set forth above.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that, in addition to current initiatives, the Secretary of Defense also consider using funds that may remain available in the Base Closure Account, after costs to implement the Commission's recommendations have been satisfied, to lease or acquire land to facilitate the creation of an expanded range complex.

Department of Defense Presence in the National Capital Region (NCR)

The Commission is aware of the Congress' concern with the DoD presence in the NCR as discussed in Senate Report 100-57, "National Defense Authorization

Act for 1988 and 1989," dated May 8, 1987. The Commission has reviewed the results of a master-development planning effort documented in "A Report to the Congress on DoD Administrative Space Planning for the National Capital Region," dated May 1988, conducted under the auspices of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

The Commission notes that much of DoD-occupied administrative space in the NCR is leased, that lease costs in the NCR are among the highest in the nation, and that occupancy costs for DoD space in the NCR are expected to soar in the next ten years unless remedial action is initiated.

Consequently, the Commission endorses the broad planning goals developed in the study and urges the Secretary of Defense to consider long-range alternatives to reduce the cost of leased space in the NCR. The Commission specifically encourages the Army's public-private development plans for the Fort Belvoir Engineer Proving Ground. The development concept is to encourage the sale or exchange of the 820-acre parcel to a private developer who would, in turn, construct needed office facilities for the Department of the Army on a portion of the site, and develop the balance of the site as private office parks and residential communities. The Commission supports the passage of special legislation authorizing this public-private development and similar DoD initiatives in the National Capital Region. Certain of the Commission's recommendations with respect to Fort Meade, Maryland, are also in consonance with this concept.

Innovative Real Estate Transactions

The Army's development plan at Fort

Belvoir is illustrative of various innovative real-estate agreements being pursued by all the Services. These efforts typically lead to enhanced mission capability, consolidation of Department of Defense functions, and significant cost savings.

Another example of such transactions is the Marine Corps plan to consolidate its geographically separate activities in the Kansas City area. As a result of creative real-estate agreements, three Marine Corps functions will be collocated in the same vicinity with Army, Navy, and Air Force activities.

The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense establish policies and guidelines that encourage the Services to pursue innovative real-estate transactions.

Consolidation of Reserve Component Locations

In reviewing Department of Defense reserve-unit locations, the Commission found there were many opportunities for improved efficiency through closure and realignment. The Commission was reluctant, however, to include such facilities for closure and realignment, since there is no statutory guarantee that proceeds from the sale of a specific reserve activity will be applied directly to the associated relocation costs.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense accelerate current efforts to consolidate Reserve Component locations and sponsor special legislation allowing the sale of land and facilities to fund related relocations.

Study of Military Laboratories

The Commission recognized that the numerous laboratory activities of the Department of Defense are important to maintaining necessary technological competence, but, because of time constraints, was unable to review the entire complex subject, particularly with regard to an examination of missions versus ongoing activities and the relationship between in-house and contract work. The Commission was also provided information concerning the declining R&D budget and the resultant concern that laboratory capabilities were being diluted or subsidized by activities better performed elsewhere. The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense establish a task force to examine these concerns. Such a review should include the development and application of a uniform set of standards designed to improve the overall effectiveness of the Department's laboratory activities, with a view toward consolidating such activities and eliminating those functions that might better be accomplished by the private sector.